

SHEM - LIVED IN ARABIA - PROTO - SEMITIC - ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LANGUAGE AND RELIGION P. 219

4. Proto-Semitic

The fact that Semitic languages share so many characteristics has led historically to the search for a common ancestor usually termed 'Proto-Semitic.' Although scholars now would hesitate to posit development from an unattested proto-language, the clear existence of elements common to many recorded Semitic languages makes the concept of Proto-Semitic, or at least of 'Common Semitic', a useful one. Various theories have been put forward concerning the alleged homeland of the earliest Semites and their spread over the area where Semitic is found. **A series of migrations in waves, all stemming from the Arabian desert,** notably an Amorite migration in the second millennium BCE followed by a migration of Aramaeans in the first, has long been the accepted explanation.



By RAHIM ALI